

SPOTLIGHTS

Berger Named Executive Director

Ben Berger, associate professor of political science, Swarthmore College, has been appointed executive director of the Lang Center for Civic and Social Responsibility for a five-year term. He has served as the interim executive director of the Center since July, 2015.

"During that time," says provost Tom Stephenson, "he has demonstrated his energetic commitment to the social justice mission of the Lang Center, and an ability to bridge disciplinary boundaries in pursuit of deepening its support of the curriculum."

As interim director, Berger continued the center's expansive programming, selected a new class of Lang Opportunity Scholars, and spread word about the center's mission and resources to the college community through a series of faculty receptions and discussions.

"I approached this interim year as a renovator rather than a caretaker," Berger says. "I didn't want simply to tread water, because I felt sure that I could accomplish some changes that would be useful to any long-term executive director the school ultimately chose. I especially wanted to continue the faculty outreach that I began under my outstanding colleague Joy Charlton."

He credits Jan R. Liss, executive director of Project Pericles, for his successful transition into the role, noting that his experience as a Periclean faculty leader and program codirector helped prepare him for his current position. Going forward, Berger wants to expand the Center's circle of usefulness to even more faculty colleagues and students.

"Eugene Lang '38 always aspired for his Center to connect the curriculum to the community, and I look forward to sharpening the details and definitions of 'community,'" Berger says. "I want us to connect our rigorous teaching and research to the campus community and its many, vital student groups; to the local communities of Chester and the greater Philadelphia region, where we aspire to create reciprocal partnerships and to cocreate knowledge; to more far-flung communities around the country and the world; and to the community of scholars and activists who share knowledge via publications and conference presentations for the purpose of social amelioration."

Berger, who will continue teaching in his new role, studies the intersection between normative political theory and empirical political science. His current projects include a book on civic education and a book chapter on democratic theory. His book, *Attention Deficit Democracy: The Paradox of Civic Engagement*, won the North American Society for Social Philosophy Book Award for the best social philosophy book published in 2011. He received his AB from Princeton University and his MA and PhD from Harvard University. ■



Maxwell Receives Fellowship

Lida Maxwell, associate professor of political science at Trinity College, was awarded a Mellon Mid-Career Research Fellowship at Yale's Whitney

Humanities Center for 2016–2017 to write about truth-telling in politics for her book project, *Truth in Public*. The book raises normative questions about how

citizens make collective judgments about truth in the public realm. In particular, Maxwell is interested in asking why some speakers (usually white, male, heterosexual) are viewed as more credible than others.

Maxwell, a political theorist, said she was inspired to work on this project by a first-year seminar she taught at Trinity in fall of 2011 called "Truth, Lies, Politics." In that class, Maxwell and her students read texts on truth and lying by thinkers such as Plato, Augustine, Michel Foucault, and Hannah Arendt. Maxwell's engagement with students helped to shape the main questions she would explore in her book.

"I love having my thinking unsettled," Maxwell said about students asking questions in the classroom.

Rather than focusing on the negative aspects of a lack of truth in politics, Maxwell's research asks questions like, "Who counts as a proper truth-teller?" and "What roles 'qualify' individuals to tell the truth?" The project explores the ways that citizens struggle with, validate, or even declaim truths, and how the person preaching the truth affects how it is received.

Maxwell said, "The connection between these two parts of the project is that I think our collective ability to grapple with truth is deeply linked to how we make judgments about who counts as a proper truth-teller." ■

—Text adapted from story by Liz A. Boyhan



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Robinson Receives Provost's Medal

Jean Robinson, associate executive dean of College of Arts and Sciences, Indiana University, Bloomington, received the Provost's Medal from provost and executive vice president Lauren Robel. First given in 1997, the medal recognizes outstanding service that builds and enhances the impact of Indiana University.

"Jean is an absolutely stellar academic and administrator," Robel said, "and a common theme runs throughout the whole of her career—namely that she has consistently focused her vast talents and intellect on bettering the lives of others and ensuring that promising young people have access to the best educational opportunities possible. In this sense, she has been the very definition of a leader on the Bloomington campus. She has led by example, and she has inspired so many others to dedicate themselves to the educational mission that is at the heart of Indiana University."



Robinson has served as executive associate dean of the College since 2011 and as an Indiana University (IU) faculty member for more than 35 years. She served as founding coordinator and director of women's studies at IU Bloomington from 1977 to 1982 and dean of women's affairs from 1998 to

2003. In the College of Arts and Sciences, she has been associate dean for faculty and academic programs and associate dean for undergraduate education as well as executive associate dean. She was interim dean of the Hutton Honors College and director of the Leadership, Ethics, and Social Action program.

As a scholar, Robinson has published widely on education policy, gender and inequality, and other topics. She began her academic career as a specialist on contemporary Chinese politics but more recently has published on inequality in school finance, marriage equality and gender, and information technology.

She was a founding member of the Research Network on Gender, Politics, and the State and has led and served on various committees regarding women in research for the Committee for Institutional Cooperation and other organizations. She has been awarded three National Science Foundation grants as well as National Endowment for the Humanities, Fulbright, and Spencer Foundation funding.

As a teacher, she has directed more than 40 dissertations, more than two-thirds of which were by female PhD candidates and two of which won national awards for outstanding research. She was instrumental in the college's creation in 2008 of Themester, a campus-wide themed semester program.

She has received the IU President's Award for Distinguished Teaching, the George Pinnell Distinguished Service Award, and eight other teaching and service awards. ■

Members Prominent among 2016 Andrew Carnegie Fellows

Carnegie Corporation of New York has named the 33 winners of the 2016 Andrew Carnegie Fellows. APSA is delighted to see seven members selected as Fellows to produce a book or major study. The fellows were selected based on the originality, promise, and potential impact of their proposals. Each will receive up to \$200,000 toward the funding of one to two years of scholarly research and writing aimed at addressing some of the world's most urgent challenges to US democracy and international order. The program supports both established and emerging scholars. Information about the seven scholars is listed in the People Section. ■

Taylor Becomes Dean

Steven Taylor, professor and chair of the political science department, Troy University, has been appointed dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. Taylor has been a member of the Troy faculty since 1998, starting out as an assistant professor of



political science, and has served as chair of the department since 2012.

"I look forward to working with the chairs and faculty of the college to work on all of our shared goals," Taylor said. "I am looking forward to helping get the college . . . to enhance our scholarly reputation that I think we deserve," Taylor said.

One of Taylor's immediate focuses as dean will be to get the School of Science and Technology fully operating. The school, which officially began in the spring of 2015, encompasses the departments of biological sciences, chemistry and physics, mathematics and geomatics, and computer science. The school is currently in its early stages of development, and according to Taylor, the university is pursuing some grants and coordinating events to get it up and running in the near future.

Taylor also said that he will continue to teach one graduate course per semester from now on, and a new chair for the political science department will be selected in the coming weeks.

Taylor received his PhD in government from the University of Texas, Austin and received his bachelor's degree from the University of California, Irvine.

He has authored and contributed to several books and scholarly publications, including his 2009 book *Voting Amid Violence: Electoral Democracy in Colombia* and the 2014 *A Different Democracy: American Government in a 31-Country Perspective*.

Taylor is a former president of the Alabama Political Science Association and is a member of the Latin American Studies Association, American Political Science Association, Southern Political Science Association, and Southeastern Council of Latin American Studies. ■